



120

Approximate number of wild adult pallid sturgeon remaining in Montana



## BOW turns 25 in Montana

This year marks the 25th anniversary of Montana's Becoming an Outdoors-Woman (BOW) Program.

BOW was formed in 1990 in Wisconsin and now operates in 38 states and six Canadian provinces. Montana conducted its first BOW class in 1994. Since then, dozens of experienced volunteers have introduced hundreds of women to outdoor skills by providing them with information, encouragement, and hands-on instruction in a safe and supportive learning environment. Classes include fishing, shooting, archery, map and compass reading, outdoor survival, kayaking, backpacking, and more.

This year, the Montana BOW Program celebrates its 25th anniversary with three summer weekend workshops for women 18 and older. For more information about BOW in Montana, and to register for a workshop, visit the FWP website and click on "Education." ■

### INVASIVE SPECIES

## FWP, DNRC, and others step up AIS monitoring for 2018

In late 2016, invasive mussel larvae were detected in Tiber Reservoir and suspect samples were collected from Canyon Ferry Reservoir. Since then, Montana has stepped up its efforts to prevent these and other invasive species from spreading in state waters.

This year the Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Programs of FWP and the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, along with other partner agencies and organizations, will operate more than 40 watercraft inspection stations at key sites across Montana. FWP will also increase water sampling to see if invasive mussels and other damaging species are present in lakes, reservoirs, and rivers.

Liz Lodman, FWP AIS information officer, says boaters should be familiar with the state regulations created to prevent the spread of aquatic invaders:

- ▶ All motorized and nonmotorized watercraft (including canoes, kayaks, paddleboards, rafts, and drift boats) must stop at open inspection stations.
- ▶ When entering Montana, all motorized and

nonmotorized watercraft must be inspected before they can be launched on any Montana waterbody.

- ▶ All watercraft traveling west across the Continental Divide into the Columbia River Basin must be inspected before launching.
- ▶ Inspections are required for all watercraft coming off Tiber and Canyon Ferry Reservoirs. Hot water decontamination may be required.

AIS crews try to move boats through inspection stations as quickly as possible. "But they also have to be thorough," Lodman says. Boaters can speed up the process by taking a few easy steps beforehand:

- ▶ remove all water, mud, and vegetation from the boat, trailer, and anchor;
- ▶ remove the boat plug and drain;
- ▶ open and towel dry all compartments and livewells;
- ▶ drain ballasts and bilge and, if possible, wipe bilge areas dry;
- ▶ lower the motor to allow water to drain;
- ▶ clear through-hull fittings; and
- ▶ be prepared to lower the motor, open livewells, and assist with the inspection. ■

Learn more about what Montana is doing to stop aquatic invaders at [CleanDrainDryMT.com](http://CleanDrainDryMT.com).



Anglers can help by knowing AIS regulations and preparing their boats for inspection.

### STATE PARKS

## State park ram is the world's biggest

A bighorn ram that spent its life on Wild Horse Island State Park in Flathead Lake boasts the world's largest horns of its species.

In February, official scorers with the Missoula-based Boone & Crockett Club measured the deceased ram's horn length and circumference and scored it as 216 3/8 points, shattering the previous record of

wardens remove them to eliminate the temptation. The bighorn sheep, estimated at nine years old based on horn growth rings, died of natural causes. The skull and horns were kept in cold storage for a year, along with two other large sets previously retrieved from the island by FWP employees.

In the fall of 2017, FWP decided the three bighorn sheep should be measured in case they merited Boone & Crockett record book status. Employees suspected that one might be a world record and that the other two could rank in the top 10, which turned out to be the case.

Montana purchased Wild Horse Island in the early 1970s using federal Land and Water Conservation Fund dollars.

209 1/8 points. Senior Boone & Crockett officials later confirmed the ram as the world's largest.

Wild sheep enthusiasts swoon over horns that measure over 205 points and top 45 pounds. The new world-record ram's horns weighed 50 pounds.

In late 2016, after a visitor to the island reported seeing a large ram that seemed injured, an FWP game warden visited the area and found the sheep's carcass. Because it is illegal to pick up bighorn sheep horns anywhere in Montana,

Off limits to hunting, the roughly 2,000-acre state park is also home to wild horses, mule deer, bald eagles, and other wildlife. FWP manages the island to conserve its native shortgrass prairie and ponderosa pine forest. The sheep herd, numbering about 100, is used to supplement other herds throughout the region. ■



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: CARTOON BY MIKE MORAN; ELIZA WILEY; SHUTTERSTOCK; SHUTTERSTOCK; MONTANA FWP; MONTANA FWP



Recording an issue of *Montana Outdoors*.

## MONTANA OUTDOORS FOR THE BLIND

Do you know someone with visual impairment who would enjoy an audio version of *Montana Outdoors*? Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks' popular magazine is available from the Montana Talking Book Library, a service of the Montana State Library in Helena. Locally trained volunteers use the library's digital recording studio to narrate and record each issue of *Montana Outdoors* as well as *Montana The Magazine of Western History*.

The library also loans qualifying Montanans digital audio players, headphones, and other equipment for listening to the magazines on tapes, which are mailed out regularly.

The free library service requires certification of blindness, low vision, or physical disabilities that restrict reading standard print materials. For an application to subscribe to the service, contact the Montana Talking Book Library at (800) 332-3400, (406) 444-4799 (TTY/TTD), or 444-2064 (in Helena), or [mtbl@mt.gov](mailto:mtbl@mt.gov). ■

